



## ***INSIDE INDIA***

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# ***The U.S. and India: A Strategic Partnership***



**Above:** U.S. President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh prepare to announce the U.S. and India's new strategic partnership. – *Photo/Paul Morse, White House*

### ***Forging Historic Agreements***

During U.S. President George W. Bush's trip to India, the President and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced several new agreements between India and the United States – including a much-heralded nuclear deal, expansion of the Energy Dialogue and further cooperation to fight HIV/AIDS. USAID supports the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue by promoting clean

energy and making Indian electricity suppliers commercially viable through more efficient distribution. It is estimated that India's electricity sector loses more than \$7 billion a year due to outdated technology, theft and subsidies. USAID also plays a key role in combating India's HIV/AIDS epidemic – leveraging resources, knowledge and expertise to increase prevention, treatment and care.



### ***Strengthening Agriculture through Knowledge***

On a visit to Hyderabad, President Bush surveyed the National Seed Project, a USAID-backed program that brings together Indian agricultural experts with scientists from Cornell University to develop bio-engineered products specifically designed to address India's unique ...*continued next page*

**Left:** Mr. Bush tries his hand at groundnut farming. – *Photos, T.G. Venkatesh/U.S. Consulate, Chennai*

*Agriculture continued...* agricultural challenges. In India, where farming sustains two-thirds of the population, the development and introduction of stress-resistant crops is an essential component to decreasing poverty and helping the country's agriculture sector realize its potential.



**Above:** First Lady Laura Bush poses with the cast of *Galli Galli Sim Sim*, India's *Sesame Street*. From Left: Boombah the Lion, Chamki, Mrs. Bush, Googly, Nafisa Ali and Aanchoo. — Photo/Turner India

### ***Preparing Children to Get the Most out of School***

While in New Delhi, First Lady Laura Bush dropped by the set of *Galli Galli Sim Sim*, India's version of *Sesame Street*. After meeting the cast of lovable Indian muppets, Mrs. Bush recorded a segment for the educational children's show. *Sesame Street* is credited with developing children's basic learning skills, helping prepare them for formal education.

USAID's initial seed funding of \$500,000 and its in-country contacts opened the door for the *Sesame Workshop* to design and create a version of *Sesame Street* tailored specifically to India's culture and its educational needs. It also laid the foundation for leveraging additional private sector resources.

Turner Broadcasting now produces *Galli Galli Sim Sim*, which begins airing this summer.



Boombah (**above**) and Googly (**right**) welcome Mrs. Bush to India's *Sesame Street*. — Photos/Turner India





### ***Fighting Trafficking and Providing Victims with a Future***

In addition to her visit to the set of *Sesame Street*, Mrs. Bush spent time at Prayas, a USAID- and U.S. State Department-supported shelter for girls rescued from human trafficking, abuse and neglect. More than a safe home for exploited girls, Prayas also is a hub for rehabilitating vulnerable youth. Prayas provides children with education to “bridge” re-entry into formal schools and marketable vocational skills.

During her visit to the shelter, formerly neglected girls and their counselors met with Mrs. Bush to explain their experiences and personal growth. U.S. assistance to Indian non-governmental organizations like Prayas combats trafficking and expands opportunities for vulnerable youth.



**Above:** Mrs. Bush meets with children from Prayas trained in traditional Rajasthani dancing. The children performed the exciting, colorful dance for Mrs. Bush during her visit. — Photo/David Guttenfelder, Associated Press



**Left:** During her time in New Delhi, USAID organized Mrs. Bush's visit to Jeevan Jyoti Home, an orphanage run by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. Here, children from the home display their artwork for Mrs. Bush and Mrs. Jeanie Mulford (wife of U.S. Ambassador David C. Mulford). Javeen Jyoti is a home for children with emotional and physical disabilities. —Photo/ David Guttenfelder, Associated Press

***Empowering Women***

In Hyderabad, influential Indian women joined the First Lady for a roundtable discussion on the serious challenges affecting girls and women in India today. The conversation included discussion of what women's groups can do to combat current problems.

These are important issues in India where gender inequalities increase women's exposure to violence and limit women's social status, decision-making autonomy, security within marriage and community, and ownership of property.

USAID supports efforts to empower women in India. Working with private and public partners, USAID provides education and vocational skills to girls, services and legal aid for girls and women facing violence (including victims of trafficking), and initiatives to support women's entrepreneurship.



**Above:** Mrs. Bush and leading Indian women discuss issues affecting women and girls in India. – Photo/Christopher Wurst, U.S. Consulate, Chennai